

IN MEMORIAM

COL. MIKE McKINNEY

OCT. 18, 1840--AUG 9, 1925

HEPSY ADELINE McCLURE

APRIL 23, 1842--MAY 29, 1937

FUNERAL SERVICES OF COL. AND MRS.
MIKE McKINNEY HELD FROM BLUE RIDGE,
GEORGIA, BAPTIST CHURCH, AND TRAN-
SCRIBED FROM THE SERMONS OF DR. W. L.
CUTTS, AND THE REV. L. CLINTON CUTTS

SEPTEMBER 1937

PRICE 25 CENTS



COL. MIKE McKINNEY

1840-1925



HEPSY ADELINE McCLURE

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THE LATE DR. W. L. CUTTS

Pastor of the Blue Ridge Baptist Church, who officiated at the funeral of Col. Mike McKinney



REV. L. CLINTON CUTTS

Pastor of McCaysville, Ga., Baptist Church, who officiated at the funeral of Mrs. Mike McKinney. He is a son of the late Dr. W. L. Cutts.

He married just at the age of twenty-one. Next Sunday, August 16, the family had arranged, all preliminary steps taken and a favorable response received looking to an entire family reunion here next Sunday morning, August 16, but God, in his good Providence, ordered otherwise.

It was my personal pleasure, my distinguished privilege of attending, five or six years ago, such family reunion and sharing in the felicitations of the family joys and the strengthening of the already strong family ties, and supplicating in their behalf at the throne of Divine Grace with thanksgiving for the riches of His glory as having rested upon this distinguished family.

It was my privilege barely more than eight years ago, as I came to be a citizen of this community, very early to form acquaintance with "Uncle Mike," if the family and the audience will permit a bit of personal familiarity. He was in the building material business, and soon, of course, I had need to engage with him or someone in the business along that line. I never formed a more pleasant business relationship with any man, and thru the seven years I do not recall having purchased a dollar's worth of anything apart from him that was in his line, and not the remotest approach of a thing edgy or sensitive or shady or bordering on the suggestion of an embarrassment. I sought his counsel along that line, found him wise and free and true.

Since this hour in the providence of God is here and somebody has to officiate in this solemn capacity, I account it an honor, esteem it a privilege and a distinction to be here and bear some simple word of testimonial sacred to his memory, which I shall follow in a few words more.

I am turning aside from what you would think of as the conventional in a sermon of this character. I have departed far from the idea of a funeral. I am not partial to that word. I do not think of myself scarcely as in a funeral service, but rather we are passing in the way of the simple brief memorial as Christian pilgrims of our dear Brother McKinney; and I am reminded that if my own father had lived to the ripe age of "Uncle Mike" I would almost think we were dropping back to the fourth of March of this year it would be his funeral.

I congratulate you fine six sons on the good providence of God in having your father spared to you to this ripe and good age.

Now, in turning aside, as I said, from the conventional, I am reading a passage that I have never read before. I do not recall ever having heard of its having been used in connection with a burial service. It is the concluding words of the sermon on the Mount, as used by our Lord, and it is the passage that just keeps standing before me in my soul as strikingly suggestive of the life of Brother McKinney; "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of

mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock, and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock."

It is fitting for us to think in terms of a builder associated with the name and the life of Brother McKinney, Jesus talks about him who built his house upon a rock and the rain descended and the floods came and beat upon that house and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock.

God blessed him with the elements of physical strength, he built a strong body that has endured beyond life's average expectancy of four score years, - four score and a fourth of years. In the use of that strong body, thus builded and thus preserved, Brother McKinney built for himself an unsullied character and name, and his reputation will follow as a living benediction to those that shall remember him, built in the minds and memory of his fellow citizens.

Early in life, at the age of 21, as a result of the happy and God-blessed matrimonial alliance, of companionship so long enduring, he has built a marvelous family, the figures previously referred to; and what more vital contribution could any man make! In fact, I am thinking in terms of a christian father's contribution to the world, - a christian father's contribution to the world, as issuing forth in a growing and worth-while family, a contribution to the world.

Every man's life is bound to sustain to the community in which he lives, either a constructive, positive force, or the opposite, a destructive and hurtful course. We have no occasion to debate this morning as to the constructive on the one hand, or the destructive on the other hand, as emanating from the life of this good man. Not only having built his character and his reputation and his family and starter of this little town and the builder of this railroad to which reference has just been made, but the chief thing, had he been given to song, he would have lifted the chorus so familiar to us, "My Hope Was Built On Jesus' Blood and Righteousness."

If some of us had ever inquired of Uncle Mike, "Do you want much said about yourself and your life and your living, at the grave," timid, sensitive, simple-like, plain man that he was, he would have waived this suggestion aside and accounted himself as a few years full of trouble, faltering and not to be mentioned.

I am so glad that we may sing today that encouraging and comforting song of assurance, "How Firm a Foundation," how firm a foundation, on which his life was built.

I am turning now to a christian father's reward in heaven. I call attention to the christian father's contribution to the world in terms of his devotion to God and of his service to the Master. He was interested in this very unfinished house. Some of his final contributions have gone into this beautiful little synagogue. He would have been glad, if it had been the Father's will,

to have lived to have seen its completion. Recently one of the members of this church conceived the idea of organizing a layman's evangelistic club. As he cast around in his thoughts as to who would be interested he turned to Brother McKinney asking if he would like to join a select group of brethren covenanting to pray for and to contribute money for the support of a missionary evangelist to work in the Morganton Association, and before the story was unfolded to Brother McKinney he said, "Why, yes, that is a good thing. I want some stock in that." And he took stock in the most recently organized endeavor to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ over these hills so loved by him and so familiar to him. He took to that sort of thing, and tho we lay him away today, he will go on preaching thru this club a christian father's contribution to the world in all well defined and constructive endeavors.

And now a Christian father's reward in heaven, Heaven itself is not the reward. Heaven is the gift of God based upon the merits of the old rugged cross and the strength of the cleansing blood that flowed so freely,- that Brother McKinney learned so early in life to trust.

What about it, christian fathers? Reward in heaven, it is not complete as yet. He is entering upon the joys of heaven based upon the cross of Christ, and his reward will be consummated to its fullness in the approach of the last day. Revelation 14; 13: "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors and their works do follow them."

And I am thinking further in terms of Revelation 21; 1-5, not in its full merit and blessedness as yet, but already begun in the basking and bathing of himself in the sunlight of God's eternal love-no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, nor any more pain for the things are passed away. We gladly let him enter upon the rest that remaineth to the people of God, like a little child with his work well done and then falls asleep in the quiet of undisturbed slumber.

May God give his blessings to the bereaved family and to his large concourse of friends, that their hearts so sympathetic and so fullsome in their desires to do honor to this occasion. Amen."

THE E. A. BANDY LETTER

November 26th 1920 The Copper City Advance, on eve of going to press heard an erroneous report that Mike McKinney had died, and inserted a brief notice to that effect. Mrs. E. A. Bandy, eighty years of age, a life long friend of the family immediately penned the following letter. The following day Mike McKinney not only read his own death notice, but a much prized living tribute from an estimable woman who had spent more than 50 years of her life as a teacher, and had taught all of his children:

COPY OF LETTER

Copperhill, Tennessee
November 27, 1920.

Mrs. Mike McKinney,
Blue Ridge, Georgia.

My dear Friend:

In the Advance this morning we saw that Mr. McKinney left you last night. Dear Adeline, I am glad I have known you and Mike so long. You were sixteen and I was seventeen when we first met. And I am glad to say I have found you a considerate wife, a good mother, and a reliable neighbor. Having taught every one of your children, I feel like I can say, you are a very dear friend.

Mike always stood by me in school, and let the boys know to keep out of school broils - for if I had failed to manage them, that he could. Consequently your children have been industrious and obedient pupils, and the best spellers in Fannin County. If they all are fortunate enough to be with you in this bereavement - give them my love.

Add, in August I had a close call, and felt all would be well. I am better this morning than I have been in months. Asthma has been my biggest trouble, but the last few weeks I feel free from it and am gaining strength. If I were able I would visit you soon, for you and I can sympathize with each other, and no one but those who have suffered alike can know exactly how it is.

I hope you will not break up your house-keeping, for you have so many children and grand-children you can always have someone with you. And you and I surely will pass over before another ten years, and when we meet up there, I think we will know as we are known.

Add, you have been a wonderful good wife, and Mike has been a good providing husband, and he certainly commanded his household after him and taught the boys industry and fixed you and the girls in comfort. I respect his memory. He said, "Boys I am proud you have never cost me a cent in any unlawful deeds. I have not had much money for you, but I have schooled you the best I could and now, be men! and improve your opportunities!" Someone told me he said the above at a Reunion several years ago.

Add, Ellen came in and said to give you her love, and she meant it. We never have forgotten your thoughtful kindness to us when John died. I remember Emily and Galie went on an errand for me, and they looked so hot and tired and seemed so happy to do me a favor.

Everyone of your children near us then seemed so happy to do us a favor, for John was a boy they liked and they saw I was so sorely bereft, they tried to help lift my burden and grief, and even now, it seems so fresh in my mind, I feel they were angels of mercy. God bless them every one, and may you live to enjoy their riper love for you, for as our children advance in age they will appreciate Father and Mother more than they had knowledge to in younger life.

I wish you and Dr. J. M. Dave's wife could come to see us for you seem more like blood kin than just friends. I had a letter from Clint not long ago and he spoke so kindly about Tom. I wish you and all your children, and me and all mine, could meet again on earth for our reunions here, I think, is a foretaste of what will be in the Eternity before us. Somehow I do not dread the thought of going over, for half of mine are there.

Day after tomorrow, 29th, will be sixteen years since Mr. Bandy died. The Lord, through his mercy, has had me tenderly cared for by my loved ones who now want me to rest and enjoy the fruit of my labor. So I am that way by you, I want you to rest and you can tell the younger loved ones many things to help them over rough places in life. You know, the Bible says, "The aged women may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children." So do not feel your work is done, for your grandchildren will often be glad to have you to advise them when they have their share of youthful sorrow, for none of us, young or old, live in ease and comfort all the time.

With best wishes for you and yours, I remain your true and sympathetic friend,

(Signed) E. A. Bandy.

HEPSY ADELINE McCLURE

1842 - 1937

The friends and relatives of Mrs. Hepsy Adeline McKinney paid their last tribute of love and respect to her on Sunday afternoon, May 30, 1937. The funeral services were held at the Blue Ridge Baptist Church, Blue Ridge, Georgia, Rev. L. Clinton Cutts, Pastor of the McCaysville Baptist Church, McCaysville, Georgia, officiating.

Three hymns were sung at the funeral service at the church by the choir: "How Firm a Foundation," "In the Garden," and "Abide With Me." Mrs. H. M. Morris, of Blue Ridge, was at the piano. The prayer and scripture reading, from the 31st chapter of Proverbs, were given by Rev. E. M. Holt, Pastor of the Blue Ridge Baptist Church. The sermon of Rev. Cutts is as follows:

"On Tuesday, August 11, 1925, it was my privilege to be in a service here in this church, paying last tribute of love and respect to Col. Mike McKinney. Many of you here were present on that occasion and remember it well. Through the kindness and thoughtfulness of the members of the family, I have a copy of that service and of that message in detail. I have read it many times. I read it last night several times. Many of you will recall that my honored father participated in that service and as he said then, I want to say now, that since someone must officiate at such a service as this, I deeply and sincerely appreciate the honor extended to me in having an humble part in the service that shall pay tribute, respect and honor to this wife and mother.

Now, I think it proper and fitting that a connection be made between these services. They were connected in life here in their earthly existence, they are now connected in God's house, and who would dare to separate them even in thought in a service like this? It is interesting to recall, as many of you have, since the news of the home-going of Mother McKinney, the illustrious life of Col. Mike McKinney, here in our own community and in our own county. He was a charter member of this church, together with Mother McKinney, she likewise a charter member. He was a charter member of the Masonic Lodge of this place and of the Morganton Lodge that was organized in 1861, the first in this county. He founded Blue Ridge, Georgia, in 1887, and he built the first dwelling house here and erected the first business. He was the leading factor in the construction of this railroad from Atlanta to Knoxville and present in Knoxville when the last spike was driven, a gala occasion! - as well as this connecting line from Blue Ridge to Murphy. I heard him tell myself, in my visits in the home, how, in those early days, they would build heaps of fire on that quartz and flint rock and then immediately dash it with water in order to crack the rock and break it up, not having the use of dynamite. He was a leading factor in the development of this county and of this city. Such was the life of Col. Mike McKinney.

Now, I recall all of that simply to say this - that through Col. Mike's useful, busy, worthy life, serving nobly and admirably his day and generation, in it all and through it all, here was his inspiration. Here was his love. Here was his encouragement. Here was his partner, his helpmeet. Now, my friends, you can't explain Col. Mike McKinney apart from her. It can't be done. Of all the honors heaped upon his head, and justly so, I am persuaded that if we could pull the curtains back a bit and see behind the scenes of all that took place, we would say, as we do say this day, let a double portion of that honor fall upon her. She deserves it. She was his helpmeet.

I recall that my father read on that occasion the closing verses of the Sermon on the Mount, about the man that built his house upon a rock, - a firm foundation. He portrayed Col. McKinney as a builder of a strong body, a fine family and a reward in heaven. All upon a firm foundation, Jesus Christ.

Now, I would parallel the thought, just like those two rails run that he labored so to construct, and direct your attention briefly to that companion builder, that helpmeet, upon whom we bestow double honor this day. Born April 23, 1842. Think of it! Mother McKinney, as she was affectionately known by all of us, lived under the administration of twenty-three presidents. Think of it! There were only nine before her. Twenty-three presidents! Think of what this good mother has seen in her day. Surely the paper expressed it correctly when it said that she has witnessed a Century of Progress.

Early in life, as a queenly young lady of nineteen, she cast her lot with Col. Michael McKinney. Before her marriage she was Miss Hepsy Adeline McClure. To this union eleven children were born, eight of which are living, and besides these eight children, 103 grandchildren and sixty-three great-grandchildren and seven great-great-grandchildren.

Now, as my father spoke about a Christian father's contribution to the world, what about a Christian mother's contribution, and what about this mother's contribution to the world? Her influence and her contribution will not stop this side of Eternity. The children, the eight living, are: Mrs. W. M. Wilson, of Fort Worth, Texas; Mrs. Sallie Butt, Mrs. O. G. Paden and J. B. McKinney, of Lenoir City, Tennessee; S. L. and M. K. McKinney of Blue Ridge; T. S. McKinney, of Knoxville; and Mrs. S. J. Goodwin, of Marietta, where she spent the last two years of her earthly existence, and from whose home she went to God's house.

Talking with Mrs. Cutts about the passing of Mother McKinney, I made the remark that she was certainly a great woman. As I thought about that silent, unseen and unsung walk of a humble helpmeet and partner, I said, "Surely, she was a great woman." I instantly thought of the Shunammite woman, of whom it was said in II Kings, the 4th chapter and 8th verse: "And it fell on a day that Elisha passed to Shunem, where was a great woman." Here is a woman the Bible

called great. I like the Bible. It is a wonderful Book. It is so absolutely reliable. It is truly trustworthy, and we may know that when this Book, God's Word, utters a rebuke, that rebuke is deserved, and when this Book passes a compliment to a man or a woman, that compliment has been worthily given.

Let us raise a few questions about this Shunammite woman, and see wherein her greatness lay and in so doing, I think we will find the greatness of Mother McKinney. Wherein is this woman great? - for great she was, let us not forget that. God does not make mistakes when he writes biographies. Well now, Elisha did not judge this woman, in sizing up her greatness, by so-called worldly standards. I do not think he looked to her physical charm merely. I do not think he saw only that. A woman may be ever so charming and beautiful physically and not be great. Cleopatra was a beautiful woman but she was far from a great woman. I do not think Elisha looked so closely to the social standards of this woman. Many prize such a standing and yet we could call to remembrance many who possibly stand high according to world standards of social bearing, and yet be far from great. This woman's greatness was greatness of soul. Her's was moral greatness and certainly we would say that of Mother McKinney. We can read that fact in the purpose of her life. What was the life purpose of this Shunammite woman? She was an ambitious woman. What was her ambition? What was the one thing in life that she lived for? Well, she didn't live just merely for pleasure for herself. She didn't live just to make a career and name for herself, for her own ease, her own comfort. Her purpose, her one great ambition in life was just this, - to make a home. And I am persuaded that in choosing this task she chose the highest. Such was the choice of Mother McKinney. Here is the place of supreme power and influence.

We have a great nation. We pride ourselves upon it. We should obey its laws. We should look well to the guarding of those great principles upon which our nation is founded. And yet, there is something more important than this great nation. It is the home. The home is more fundamental and important than this great nation. One has rightly said: "As goes the home so goes the nation." To be queen here and to rule rightly here is to rule rightly everywhere, and to fail here is to fail everywhere. Her life purpose, her one great consuming ambition was to build her home. This woman showed her greatness in her ability to pass by the secondary things of life and the things unimportant in order to give her heart and her all to the accomplishment of the primary thing, the greatest thing, that of building a home, but she made it, her one life's purpose, to be the greatest blessing that can come to any community or to any world. She made that life purpose to be a real home-builder.

Then again, she was great in her devotion to her task. She let nothing blur her vision to her task. She did not see in her children a handicap. She did not look upon her home and the task of rearing her children as something of a prison-house that would keep her shut in. There was an undying devotion to her task.

Did you read in the paper how this good mother spun the yarn and made the clothes with her own hands for those eleven

children and father? She had a devotion to her task. Why? Because she saw in her boys and her girls potential men and women of the future that would one day bless the world and rise up and call her blessed. Neither did she let the pinch of poverty divert her efforts nor her devotion to her task. Remember the experience of the Shunammite woman; how characteristic of this saintly woman. Elisha came to her one day and witnessed the pinch of poverty. He asked, "Shall I speak to the king or the captain of the hosts in your behalf?" To this the woman replied, "I am sufficiently protected. I count it my highest duty as well as highest privilege, to be the wife of an humble man and to make for him a home." Did you ever hear anything finer than that? Oh, she was devoted to her task. Again, her greatness shines out in her choice of the place where she will work at that task. Home was her dwelling place. She lived there. Doesn't that sound trite? Doesn't that sound time-worn? And yet, many of you can bear testimony to the fact that we do not live at home any more. It is a place where we eat, sleep and change clothes. Sad to say, yet true of so many mothers. She was great in her choice of where she would work at the task.

Home ain't a place that gold can buy or get up in a minute;
Afore it's home there's got to be a heap o' livin' in it;
Within the wall there's got to be some babies born, and then
Right there ye've got t'bring 'em up t'women good, and men;
And gradually as time goes on, you find ye wouldn't part
With anything they ever used - They've grown into your heart;
The old high chairs, the playthings, too, the little shoes they
wore
Ye hoard; an' if ye could ye'd keep the thumb-marks on the door.

Ye've got t'sing an' dance fer years, ye've got t'romp and play,
An' learn to love the things ye have by using 'em every day;
Even the roses round the porch must blossom year by year
Afore they come a part of ye suggestin' someone dear
Who used to love'm long ago, an' trained 'em just to run
The way they do, so's they would get the early morning sun;
Ye've got t'love each brick an' stone from cellar up t'dome;
It takes a heap o' livin' in a house t'make a home.

Here was a home-maker. She had a devotion to the task and she lived there. "Home, Sweet Home" was not inspired by the memory of a club. "How Dear to My Heart are the Scenes of My Childhood" was not borne out of the memory of a summer camp. These loves, these songs spring out of an abiding place where mother lived, where mother loved and where mother rocked. Her greatness lay in her purpose and in her devotion to her task,- to build a home for her husband and her children.

Again, her greatness lay in her great faith in God. Dauntless faith. Let us recall again this brief story of the Shunammite woman. You recall how the lad suddenly became ill and was carried to his mother. She nursed him in her arms until he passed on. But even when that boy was dead she did not give up hope. Did you notice that? How remarkable! Truly she was a great woman. Somehow she was convinced that this lad of hers was God's lad. And having

heard Mother McKinney speak many times, I am convinced that she looked upon her children as a gift from God. God's children. Even when the son of this Shunammite woman had died, she didn't give up hope. She takes that boy, lays him upon the prophet's bed, believing mightily in her God. She believed that her God was mighty enough to overcome every obstacle, every difficulty. Nothing was impossible to her Lord. So when hope was gone she goes in person yonder to see the prophet. And with a faith that will take no denial, she wins the victory. What a picture of a true mother at the greatest of all tasks, standing in the doorway, literally standing there and fighting death itself for her child. How many of us are alive today not because of any inherent goodness within ourselves, not because we are so wise in the ways of the world and proper living, but because of a godly mother with a faith in God that stands literally in the door and fights with her prayers and her tears and her love for her children. I dare say that the last one of us could stand up and bear testimony to that fact. The last blockade that a man will ever run on his way downward and to destruction and to doom, the last blockade such a man will run will be over a good mother, a godly mother's love, faith and prayers. She was great in her faith in God. I heard this dear mother say more than once, "His will be done." "I don't know why," she said, "the Good Master leaves me here, but His will be done," and I like to think of Mother McKinney completing her earthly task, laying down and falling asleep and waking up in God's house. We don't know a great deal about Heaven. I don't think Heaven will have to be tidied up any. I think it is far beyond our highest dreams, and yet to me it is a beautiful picture and an inspiring thought to think that this godly mother has gone on to join that companion by whose side she walked so faithfully during all of his earthly existence. She has gone up there to tidy up things a bit and await the coming of that glad reunion of this marvelous family that has in a striking way been an uplift and blessing to the world and will be an ever increasing blessing.

I think of those great lines built upon the acrostic of MOTHER:

M - is for the million things she gave me,

O - means only that she's growing old,

T - is for her tears she shed to save me,

H - is for her heart of purest gold.

E - is for her eyes with love light shining

R - means right and right she'll always be;

Put them all together they spell MOTHER

The dearest word in all the world to me.

CHURCH PASSES RESOLUTION

The Blue Ridge Baptist Church of which Mrs. McKinney is a charter member passed the following resolution on the occasion of her 95th birthday:

Blue Ridge, Georgia
April 23, 1937

WHEREAS: In the providence of God our beloved sister Mrs. H. A. McKinney, who is a charter member of our church has been spared to see another birthday come, and she seems to be looking forward to see many others which we sincerely hope she may be able to see.

THEREFORE, Be it resolved by the First Baptist Church of Blue Ridge, that we extend to Mrs. McKinney our heartiest congratulations and best wishes on this her birthday and wish for her many happy returns and that she will be able to enjoy many more birthdays.

RESOLVED, FURTHER, That this church wishes to assure her that the united prayer of its membership is and will be that as she approaches life's sunset that the everlasting arms of the Infinite shall ever be beneath her and that the same great loving God who has kept her through all these years will continue to hold her in the hollow of his hand and that every possible blessing shall be hers.

RESOLVED FURTHER, that a copy of this resolution shall be mailed to Mrs. McKinney and a copy be placed upon the minutes of this church.

BLUE RIDGE BAPTIST CHURCH

BY T. H. CRAWFORD,

G. L. HUFF